for distribution of natural gas and auto LPG in cities of Andhra Pradesh. Initially, Hyderabad/Secunderabad have been identified for dispensing auto LPG by the proposed Joint Venture Company.

GAIL will consider city gas distribution including CNG in other cities after establishing technical feasibility and economic viability of the respective projects.

Amount locked in litigation

*329. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item captioned "Rs.10,000 crore locked in tax litigation" which appeared in the 'Business Standard' dated 27th May, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to liquidate the huge mounting arrears of cases pertaining to tax litigation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news report discusses the appointment of a panel of lawyers to conduct customs and excise cases in High Courts. This is a matter of discussion between the Department of Revenue and the Law Ministry.

(c) Liquidating arrears of cases is a continuing process involving reforms in the tax structure, simplifying laws and procedures, setting up of new forums for disposal of cases, etc. It is Government's constant endeavour to bring down arrears of cases.

Financial package for coffee and tea growers

*330. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have rescheduled the loans availed by coffee and tea growers and have put two year moratorium on repayment of principal amount;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether any special financial package and concessions are being worked out for coffee and tea growers in respect of their future borrowings; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) In order to provide relief to coffee growers to tide over the present crisis of low prices, the Reserve Bank of India has announced a new relief package for the coffee sector.

As part of the new package, all types of coffee loans (short, medium and long term including re-phased/rescheduled loans) which are outstanding as on 30th June, 2002 and not classified as Non Performing Assets, will be consolidated into a single term loan *viz.* Special Coffee Term Loan (SCTL) 2002 with repayment schedule ranging between 7—9 years including an initial repayment holiday(moratorium) of two years, subject to review thereafter. During the moratorium period. The banks have agreed to charge 1% less interest on SCTL. The growers who have availed crop loans in 2001-02 shall pay back a minimum 75% of crop loans to be eligible for availing fresh crop loans in 2002-03, the balance 25% could be included for re-schedulement in the special coffee term loans package. This package is expected to provide substantive relief to coffee growers who are facing hardships due to prevailing low coffee prices.

In so far as re-schedulement of loans of tea growers is concerned, the matter is already before the Reserve Bank of India who have constituted a committee to work out some financial package/concessions for tea growers.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Production cost of Oil and Gas

*331. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) average cost of production of crude oil and gas, unit-wise *viz.* per barrel and per SCM respectively incurred by ONGC and OIL, separately in the country;

(b) average incidence of statutory charges in the form of levies, taxes, royalty, etc.on crude oil and gas, unit-wise;